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Student Teaching Elementary
Unit Plan

Constructing Community

A Unit Plan on Community Building

AGE/GRADE: 4th/5th **TIME:** 50 minutes

BACKGROUND: Students participate in conflict resolution/community building activities once per week. This lesson takes community building to another level.

OBJECTIVE: To have students recognize similarities and commonalities in their classmates upon which to build friendships and classroom community.

GOALS:

- 1) Students will self-reflect on their own perceived strengths and positive attributes.
- 2) Students will practice writing skills individually and in small groups.
- 3) Students will make connections with peers regarding their likes, dislikes, and similarities.
- 4) Students will practice large group speaking and listening skills.
- 5) Students will use both small and large group skills in creating and performing tableaux.
- 6) Students will learn the following dramatic terms and skills: thought tracking, staging, activating the scene, and storyboard.
- 7) Students will practice critical thinking skills by making educated guesses and predictions in their own scenes and by watching others perform.

STRUCTURE:

DAY 1: Preparation

The meeting area needs to be cleared. There should be a blank board on hand. Copies need to be made for every student of the “Cultural Connection” worksheet.

DAY 1: Materials

Cultural Connections worksheets, pencils, whiteboard and markers

DAY 1: Procedure

1. Students sit in the meeting area to discuss topics on the worksheet (see attachment).
2. As the teacher asks questions, responses can be clustered on the board, either written by the students or the teacher. Questions to ask: what is culture?, what is a role model?, etc.
3. Students go to their desks to work on the cultural connections worksheet to get them thinking about themselves, the things that make them unique, and the similarities they have with their classmates.

DAY 2: Preparation

A large space needs to be cleared for students to move about freely. A stack of sticky notes needs to be on hand. The dramatic terms for the unit need to be written on the board. Copies of storyboard sheets for each group of four as well as superhero strips for every pair need to be made.

DAY 2: Materials

Whiteboard and markers, pencils, blank pieces of paper, sticky notes, storyboard sheets, markers, strips of paper for superheroes

DAY 2: Procedure

1. Students meet in the meeting area. Students are reminded of the “Cultural Connections” worksheets they filled out. Students are told they come from so many different backgrounds and places, yet they still have many similarities. Students will be seeing if they can make more/different connections with their peers. Teacher asks, “what are some things we might have in common?” and writes them on the board (try to go for categories here! Ex. Color, things to eat, hobbies, etc.). Teacher asks, “before we move on to our activities, what is an adjective?” Short discussion ensues.
2. Students are asked to return to their desks. Teacher initiates a freewriting activity for 3-5 minutes, asking students the following: make a list of adjectives that describe yourself, write down some activities you enjoy, list some things you like to eat, note places you like to go, write holidays you like to celebrate, hobbies that you have. Students are then given a sticky note to write their names on.
3. Teacher asks students to look over their lists, then join in a circle without their papers and with their sticky notes. The teacher reminds the students to look out for similarities between themselves and their classmates during the next few activities.
4. Students will put the sticky note on the floor in front of them. The class will then play a say and repeat game: one student says his/her name and does an action based on one of the things they wrote down (ex. ‘My name is Jonte and I am crazy!’). Everyone in the circle must repeat the name and action.
5. After everyone has finished, the teacher will move to the middle of the circle (the teacher should NOT have a sticky note on the ground). The name of the game is “The Sun Shines For...” When the teacher calls out something physical (ex. ‘anyone who has green shoes’) or a like/dislike (ex. ‘anyone who loves to eat cake’), anyone who fits into that category must move to a new place in the circle. People must move ACROSS the circle...they cannot switch places with their neighbors. Whoever doesn’t have a place gets to choose a new physical thing or a like/dislike.
6. After ten rounds or so, the teacher will segue into “The Human Barometer” by asking students to pick up the person’s sticky note that is in front of them and return it to their owner. When they return it, they have to say one put-up to the person. Once all notes are returned, teacher makes one end of a space represent one extreme and the opposite end of the space the other, asking: those who like to go to the beach to those who hate the beach, those who were born in NYC to farther away, those who love the mountains to those who hate the mountains, those who love to be inside to those who love to be outside, those who like to move to those who like to sit still, those who like really long novels to those who like short stories, those

- who like fruits to those who like veggies, those who have traveled a lot to those who haven't traveled very much, those who love spicy food to those who love mild food.
7. Then the teacher asks students to walk about the space, not touching each other, not walking in the same direction. When the teacher calls out, "Sticky High Five," students should freeze in a high five with the person nearest to them. They then must figure out something they have in common. The game should repeat two or three more times.
 8. The last "Sticky High Five" people become partners. They decide on one thing they have in common. They then turn that common thing into super hero characters. For example: Two partners decide they both like cheese. They call themselves the Super Cheese Eaters. Each group writes the title of their superhero characters on a strip of paper.
 9. Next, groups are paired together. Each group is to create a tableau of either their superhero characters meeting for the first time or working together to do a good deed.
 10. Super hero groups are then handed a piece of paper with three boxes. Groups are asked to draw their tableau and write a caption for it in the first box. Teacher informs students that they will add on to their tableaus the next day and also have presentations.
 11. Students gather in the meeting area. Teacher reminds the group of the list they made as a class of things they could possibly have in common. Teacher asks, "what new things did you notice about your classmates?" and "what new things did you learn about one another?" The teacher then asks students to add to the categories the class made in the beginning.
 12. Recap of list, games, superheroes. Tomorrow the class will learn to activate tableaus and do thought tracking.

DAY 3: Preparation

A large space needs to be cleared for students to move about freely. The dramatic terms for the unit need to be written on the board. Copies of storyboard sheets and superhero strips need to be returned to groups. There needs to be a stack of blank paper on hand.

DAY 3: Materials

Markers, storyboard sheets, superhero strips, sheets of paper for every student, whiteboard and markers

DAY 3: Procedure

1. Class is asked what they did the previous day. Teacher can remind students if necessary.
2. Students are asked to get into their super hero groups and practice their tableau.
3. Teacher explains thought tracking: "Your brain is constantly going. You are always thinking in some way. In your tableau, what would your character be thinking right now? If I were to come tap you on the shoulder, what would your character have to say?" (Do an example using baseball) Instruct all groups to thought track their characters.
4. Teacher will now direct the students to activate their tableaus based on what their characters are thinking. "Rules" (to be posted on the board): Students must not tell the names of their superheroes. Students will use their tableau as their beginning.

- They must have a middle and ending to their scene. Every character must speak at least once. At least one student must remain in the space when the scene ends (in other words, not all the characters can walk off the stage).
5. After being given adequate time for rehearsal, students are asked to finish filling in their story board by drawing something from the middle of their scene and the scene's ending. They must also write a caption for each image.
 6. Students will then present their scenes to the class. The audience will get two or three guesses as to who the superhero characters were. The presenting group will then tell the class who they were. The teacher posts the superhero name sign.
 7. The teacher then talks about superheroes: "Every student here is a superhero for who you are. You have been in class together for eight months, some of you have known each other for longer. I hope you all learned more about one another in the past two days. Hopefully you can use this to make new friends and strengthen friendships inside and outside of this classroom."
 8. IF TIME: teacher will have students sit in a circle. Teacher will pass around a sheet of blank paper to every student. Students write their names on the top of the paper. Teacher says: "The way we present ourselves, such as how we presented ourselves in our scenes, helps people recognize us. Our stance, space, and the things we say make people form opinions. We should show and share positive pieces of ourselves so people recognize positive things. Let's share what we have learned about each other." Students are then told they will write put-ups for every person in the class. They are to look at the person's name and write one put-up or adjective about the person that ISN'T PHYSICAL (ex. "I like your hair" will not work, "You are smart" will work). Have students practice a few out loud on a character from a book they are reading. Students are then instructed to pass the paper to their right and write something down at the bottom of the page. Students then fold back the paper so what they wrote can't be seen by the next person, and the student's name is still at the top of the paper. Teacher can regulate when the paper should be passed. The process repeats until papers get back to their "owner"! Students can then unfold their papers and read what their classmates have to say about them.

ASSESSMENT:

- Teacher will keep track of daily student participation and understanding using class grid
- Teacher will match tableaux and scenes to storyboards
- Discussions will allow teacher to note what terms the class knows (on the worksheets and within dramatic activities) and which ones need to be discussed/explained more thoroughly
- If students are able to add to categories they made in the beginning of the lesson, the lesson generated awareness
- Students will demonstrate their understanding of directions by participating and engaging in the activities
- Students will demonstrate their understanding of making connections and put-ups through the put-up pages at the end of the lesson

Cultural Connections

Name: _____ Date: _____

Grade: _____ Class Teacher: _____

1. What languages do you speak at home?

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

2. What types of food do you eat at home?

3. Name three important holidays you celebrate with your family.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

4. Who lives with you? (no names, please! Example: mother, uncle, friend, etc.)

5. What culture or cultures do you feel a part of?

6. Name three of your role models.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

GO TO BACK →

7. Name three qualities you admire in a person.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

8. Who are you most like in the class? Why?

9. Who are you least like in the class? Why?

10. Describe your neighborhood.

11. Describe one of your closest/best friends.
